

**JEFFERSON COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN UPDATE
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN
MARCH 29, 2010**

Section 1: Introduction

In spring 2010, Jefferson County began the process of preparing an update to its Farmland Preservation Plan as an amendment to its 1999 Comprehensive Plan, in compliance with Wisconsin's Working Lands Initiative and comprehensive planning law. A key component of preparing or amending a comprehensive plan is actively involving community stakeholders. Participation ensures that the plan reflects the community's vision.

Section 2: Purpose

Based on Section 66.1001(4)(a), Wisconsin Statutes, the purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to outline the procedures to be used in the Farmland Preservation Plan Update planning process to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meetings, and to ensure that there are opportunities for public participation at every stage of its preparation. Through execution of this Public Participation Plan, the County intends to actively involve the public and key community interests in identifying major issues, a preferred farmland preservation policy refinement approach, and selecting strategies and developing a detailed plan to achieve that desired approach.

Section 3: Policy Guidelines for Public Participation

To foster public participation in the planning process, the following guidelines will be followed:

- All public meetings will be publicized in advance and open to the public. These meetings will be held to discuss the Farmland Preservation Plan and other related issues.
- County staff and consultants will be utilized to prepare and disseminate information to the public on the planning and participation efforts.
- Updates on the planning efforts and encouragement of public participation in the plan creation will be enhanced through the use of the internet. See the County's web site: www.co.jefferson.wi.us.
- Public and Town official comments will be solicited and responded to at every stage of plan creation through techniques such open houses, interviews, small group meetings, and public hearings.
- The County will utilize a steering committee comprised of the County's standing Zoning and Planning Committee plus other key stakeholders to provide policy guidance in the plan preparation. The committee will meet in a public setting over the course of the planning process, and will provide an opportunity for public comment at each meeting.
- The steering committee will direct two main events during the course of the planning process to solicit Town official and general public advice and feedback: Town Quadrant Meetings (mid 2010) and an Open House for Draft Plan (late 2010). The committee, County staff, and consultants will prepare publicity materials to encourage broad public input at those meetings, and carefully compile and review results.
- The County will provide updates on the planning process at regular County Board meetings and via media and other correspondence.

- The County Zoning and Planning Committee will be asked to recommend adoption of the draft plan to the County Board.
- A public hearing on the draft plan will be held to provide further opportunity for public feedback prior to plan adoption. Following this public hearing, revisions will be made as necessary. A Class 1 hearing notice in the County's official newspaper of record will be published at least 30 days prior to the public hearing.
- The general approach for completion of the farmland preservation plan is included on the following page. More detailed timelines and meeting schedules and agendas will be provided on the County's web site when available.